

פרשת וילך / Parashat Vayeilech

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Z'man Matan Torah and Yeshua the Messiah

השבועות הזה קוראים / This Week's Reading

תורה: Deuteronomy 31:1-31:30
הפטרה: Isaiah 55:6-56:8
הברית: Romans 10:14-18
החדשה

10 In this week's parsha, Parahsat Vayeilech, Moshe gives some closure to Sefer
Devarim by explaining the reason why he can no longer lead Yisrael (*Devarim /*
Deuteronomy 31:2), introduces his successor Yehoshua (*Devarim / Deuteronomy*
31:3-8), and then presents a written copy of the Torah to the Leviim and elders. It
15 is at this point Moshe commands the Torah to be read once very seven years at the
festival of Succoth. Because of the new generation of people who are entering the
Promised Land, and for the reason for the recording of the mitavah of Hakhel in
this week's parsha it was necessary for this generation to relive the Ma'amad Har
Sinai experience. Once very seven years Am Yisrael (the people of Israel) must
20 relive this event of Ma'amad Har Sinai as the men and women and children gather
together at the Beit HaMikdash on Chag Ha'Succoth for a public celebration to
hear the Torah. Making a comparison, during this event the Torah will be read in
public (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 31:9-13*) just as it was read in public at Har Sinai
(the mountain of Sinai) (*Shmot / Exodus 24:4-7*) and also just as it was a Har
Eival in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 27:3-8*.

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פרש' וַיִּלְךָ מֹשֶׁה וַיְדַבֵּר אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֶל־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל: לֹא
2 נִיאָמַר אֲלֵהֶם בְּיָמָאָהּ וְעֲשִׂים שָׁנָה אֶנְכִּי הַיּוֹם לֹא־
אוֹכַל עוֹד לְצֵאת וּלְבֹא וַיְהוּה אָמַר אֵלַי לֹא תַעֲבֹר
3 אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן הַזֶּה: יְהוּה אֱלֹהֶיךָ הוּא | עָבַר לְפָנֶיךָ הוּא
יִשְׁמֵד אֶת־הַגּוֹיִם הָאֵלֶּה מִלְּפָנֶיךָ וַיִּרְשָׁתֶם יְהוּשֻׁעַ
4 הוּא עָבַר לְפָנֶיךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוּה: וְעָשָׂה יְהוּה
לָהֶם כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לְסִיחֹן וּלְעוֹג מַלְכֵי הָאֱמֹרִי
5 וּלְאַרְצָם אֲשֶׁר הִשְׁמִיד אֹתָם: וְנָתַנְם יְהוּה לְפָנֶיכֶם
6 וְעִשִׂיתֶם לָהֶם כְּכָל־הַמִּצְוָה אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִי אֹתְכֶם: חֻקֵּי

Matan (מתן)

is a Hebrew name, mostly for boys, coming from the word 'gift' and literally means "giving". It is part of the title of the Jewish holiday of Shavuot that is also known as "Z'man Matan Torah" meaning the "time [of the] giving [of the] Torah."

30 According to Judaism the parallel purpose of these pasukim (passages) is the
need to periodically teach these mitzvot (commandments) at a national gathering
to emphasize another significant aspect of Matan Torah. The parallel or ultimate
purpose of the mitzvot of Sever Devarim is not only to enable each individual to
develop his own, personal relationship with G-d but also to create an “am kadosh”
35 (a holy nation) in the land of Yisrael more specifically a nation that can properly
represent G-d to the other nations. It is possible the reason was also to impress
upon the new generation of people in their duty to achieve the goals that were
originally destined for their parent’s generation and the feast of Tabernacles is a
most important commemoration of this.

40 Interestingly though I believe this time is even more significant according to
Zechariah 14:16-17.

Zechariah 14:16-17

45 *14:16 Then it will come about that any who are left of all the nations that
went against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King,
the Lord of hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths. 14:17 And it will
be that whichever of the families of the earth does not go up to Jerusalem
to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, there will be no rain on them.
(NASB)*

50 The Feast of Tabernacles is a most important commemoration. *Zechariah
14:16-17* tells us that one day all nations will be required by law to honor this
feast. Have you ever wondered why? Maybe you not noticed this before? I want
to suggest an even more significant reason for the mitzvot to be repeated at a
national gathering. As you know the festivals are G-d’s prophetic foreshadowing
of major events that are going to take place. And specifically the feasts of the
Lord get extra weight and purpose in His ordained feasts because they foreshadow
the coming of the Messiah. What some of you may not realize is that this period
of time has great significance in that it is the time in which Yeshua (Jesus) was
born around the feast of Succoth, not on December 25. Tradition says December
25 (or Christmas) but as most everyone knows and should realize the date of
December 25 was meant to convert a pagan festival into a “Christian” festival buy
the Catholic Church. The motivation behind this was apparently to make an
alternative to the pagan festival (mystery religions) celebrated at the time by
65 Greco-Roman culture. (Note also the reason for the reading of the Torah during
Succoth is even more significant since Yeshua is the Living Word of G-d, the
Living Torah how appropriate is it to do such a thing?)

70 In order to calculate the time of Yeshua’s birth we must begin with Zechariah,
the father of John the Baptist. To establish the date we have to rely upon clues
which are found in the scriptures that point to historical and cultural elements on
the birth of John since he is a forerunning who was supposed to announce the
coming of the Messiah Yeshua. According to *Luke 1:5* Zechariah was a priest of
the order of Abijah. He was performing his duties, during incense in the Temple,
75 when an angel appeared and said his wife Elizabeth would conceive and bear a
son and he would call his name Yochanan (John). 1st Chronicles tells us that the

Levitical priesthood was divided into 12 divisions of priests. Josephus, a Jewish historian from antiquities, tells us that each division served for a period of one week. According to the Mishnah the first division began its period of service on the first day of the year (1 Nisan or Aviv) as HaShem had established the calendar in *Shmot / Exodus 12:2*. Now there were 24 families of priests so each family of priests would minister about twice a year. The three weeks of each year during the weeks of Pesach (Passover), Shavuot (Pentecost) and Succoth (Tabernacles) all 24,000 priests served together. This delayed the cycle slightly because all of the priests were required to serve at the temple during these three important festivals.

The family of Abijah was eighth in line so Zechariah would have served his first cycle during the month of Sivan (approximately the month of June) and his second period of service would have been during Kislev approximately six months later. The record of Zechariah's service in the book of Luke doesn't provide for us for sure which period he served but if we assume the first period we get an interesting result; according to *Luke 1:23-24*, Zechariah finished his period of duty around the middle of Sivan. Zechariah's unbelief caused G-d to strike him dumb so he could not speak when he went home to be with his wife. Zechariah's wife Elizabeth conceived shortly after his return home setting the date of Yochanan (John) conception at approximately the third week of Sivan. According to the Gregorian year 2001, the week in question corresponds to the first week of June. Next we add 40 weeks to this date for the normal period of fetal growth and we find ourselves back around at the month of Nisan the following year. As you know Hag Pesach (festival of Pesach/Passover) occurs on the 14th of Nisan and lasts eight days. This raises the interesting point that Yochanan (John) the Baptist was born at Pesach which corresponds nicely with the rabbinic expectation that Elijah would come at Pesach. Note that during the Pesach Seder an extra cup of wine on the table at Pesach, is placed in the hope that Elijah will come and drink it. In *Luke 1:26* and *1:36* we are told that Yeshua was six months younger than Yochanan (John) which places Yeshua's birth during the High Holy Days or at Succoth.

Now according to scripture Yeshua was six months younger than Yochanan, this would place Yeshua's conception near the end of Kislev during Chanukah, the Feast of Lights, thus demonstrating in a very special way Yeshua is the light of the world, and the Shekhina glory of G-d like it says in Hebrews chapter 1. The birth of Yeshua at Succoth also demonstrates that G-d had come to earth to dwell with humanity. According to *Luke 2:21*, Yeshua was circumcised eight days later; now if Yeshua was born on the first day of Succoth the day of his circumcision would be the eight day of Succoth which just like the first day is a day of sacred assembly (see *Vayikra / Leviticus 23:39*). On this day the completion of the annual cycle of Torah readings finishes and starts again from *Bereshit / Genesis*. This time is called "Simchah Torah" (rejoicing of the Torah), and is considered to be a time of fulfillment of the Torah. The circumcision of Yeshua at this time indicates how he had come to fulfill the Torah and the Prophets as it says in *Matthew 5:17-18*. In *John 1:14* we read that the word has become flesh and dwelt among us could also be another reference to Succoth.

125 I believe Yeshua was born during Succoth and this brings great significance to many passages of scripture and especially to this time of year. We are about to enter a joyous time of the High Holy Festivals.

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- Rosh HaShana (New Year)
 - Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)
 - 1st Day of Succoth (Tabernacles)
 - 8th Day of Succoth (Tabernacles)
 - Simcha Torah (Rejoicing the Torah)

135 In summary, the Feast of Tabernacles is a most important commemoration and the prophet *Zechariah 14:16-17* tells us that one day all nations will be required by law to honor this feast. For what greater reason would there be a requirement than for to celebrate the birthday of the King of Kings! May we all work to overcome the influences of pagan customs that have crept into our worship of the Lord G-d Almighty. I feel this is an important part of our becoming separate from this world as a holy people before a holy G-d. I want to encourage every believer to return to the roots of the faith, take care and G-d bless!

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Be Blessed in Yeshua our Messiah!

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הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:
Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,
“Yeshua” King Messiah forever and ever